

"Point Bonita" San Francisco
Sunday, March 8th 1857

My dear Brother

Your letter of Feby 1st was recd on the 5th inst and I hasten to reply in time for the next mail. In the first place I may as well explain where I am, what I am doing, &c. I am at present Light Keeper "protem" at Point Bonita (at the entrance of the harbor of San Francisco) in the place of John Wolf who is sick. I have been here since the 3rd February, but do not expect to stop here more than perhaps a fortnight longer as Wolf will probably be able to attend to his duties by that time. Now for your letter and it is with both pleasure and grief that I write as you will observe in the sequel. It perhaps might be considered as somewhat remarkable (and it certainly seems so to me) that two brothers separated such a vast distance one on the broad Atlantic the other on the placid Pacific not having seen each other for seven long weary years, should be thinking of the same subject and at the same time too but I can assure you my dear brother, although I have not mentioned it in my letters that there has been one subject on my mind for the past two months which I have thought of more than anything else and that was the very subject which composed the principal portion of your letter to me: "the great West." I have thought much about it and have also spoke of it to several of my acquaintances. and if my circumstances were satisfactory to myself I should come home as soon as possible with the intention of making the West my future home. But as it is not my good fortune to be so circumstanced I must endeavor to console my self with the hope that by and by my situation may be more flattering, and in such an event, unless my mind changes materially from what it is at present, I shall do then just as I would do now if I had the means. I am very glad to see by your letter that your mind is turned in that direction for it is my firm and honest belief that any sober, honest, and industrious young man after he shall have attained the years of maturity and judgment can with proper diligence and perseverance attain a competency and may be able in his old age to live comfortably and to look back with pride on the path marked out by himself in his setting out in life.

I hope however you will think the matter over seriously and not be in too much of a hurry (as I see by your letter you are very ardent in the cause) for you are young yet (17 I believe) and I fear rather too young to start out into the world alone with no more experience than Mystic affords. I hope you and Edmund will be content to stay at home a while longer and help Father for he is getting old and is not so strong as he was once. Do not flatter yourself with the idea of going out into the world and being your own man for depend upon it you will rue the day unless you are old enough to be well versed in the duties of life and have some fixed plan marked out for the future.

I trust dear brother you will not be offended at the plainness of this letter for I have written it with the sole idea of benefitting you and I think you will look upon it in the same light Perhaps in a year or so I may be able to assist you somewhat and if such should be the case, rest assured it shall be done cheerfully and were I able I would do so now. but as you are aware, I got nothing for my labor last spring and summer and business was never so dull in California as at present. I hope however that my present undertaking (as my last letter to you will explain) will amount to something and I have very fair

prospects thus far that it will. for Mr. Latham says that when the New Collector is sent out by the President he will give me a letter of recommendation to him and will use his influence to get me a position in the Custom House and if the letters which I wrote to Father should succeed favorably I feel very confident that I shall be able to obtain a very good position and I have no doubt that any of Father's old political acquaintances would be willing to assist me in the way mentioned in my letters to him of Jany 20 and Feby 5th and I hope he will do the best he can for me at home for I have done and shall continue to do everything I can here to succeed. I have not written Father since the 5th of Feby nor to you since the 20 Jany. I have recieved no letters from Wm or Lydia for a long, long time and I suppose they have forgotten that they have a brother in California who would like to hear from them. It certainly cannot be expected that I should write to each one of you. Father Mother, Wm. Lydia and yourself by every mail for if I did the lettes would probably be about alike all round and would consequently be of no account. I have written to you more than to any one else for the reason that you answer all my letters and shall continue to do so so long as you so as well as you have done thus far. I am sorry to hear that there is still no prospect of a wedding in the "lane" and I think the "young Americans" of Mystic are not only very ungallant but they must be arrant cowards. I should be pleased to hear that some smart intelligenet young man had spread himself in the quarter. But I must dry up. Give my love to Father, Mother, Grandmother, to brothers and sisters and also to our little niece. Write on reciept of this and by every opportunity and believe me as ever

Your affectionate brother

Amos

To Horace.